Elder Willis Burns.
Mercutes 1843

Vol 1

Official File

Birmingham Baptist Association.

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Minutes for Sixteen

MINUTES.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH, 1839.

1. The sixth annual session of the Canaan Association met in the Mount-Zion meeting-house, when an introductory sermon was delivered by Elder J. Byers, from Mat. 16, 18, "*Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*"

2. The letters from the churches were read, and the delegate's names recorded.

3. Elected Elder H. Cox, Moderator, and Elder H. H. ROCKETT, Clerk.

4. On motion by Brother King, agreed to read the Constitution, Abstract of Faith, and Rules of Decorum.

4. On motion by Brother A. J. Holcombe, agreed to elect a Corresponding Secretary, whereupon E. King was chosen.

6. Called for correspondence, and received from the different Associations, the following brethren, as corresponding messengers, viz: Elder J. MERK, with a letter and minutes from the Cahawba; Elder H. W. MIDDLETON with a letter and minutes from the Tuscaloosa, who were cordially invited to take seats with us. *The Liberty Association*, located in North Alabama, and Tenn. petitioned by letter, through the hands of her messengers, ELDER W. H. HOLCOMBE, and Brother T. D. Leonard, for a correspondence. To which the Association, unanimously agreed to reciprocate; and the Brethren were invited to take seats with us, likewise, ministering brethren, *not* delegates, were invited to seats.

7. By suggestion of the Moderator, proceeded to appoint the following committees: On Arrangement, Brother H. Holcombe, E. King, R. Wood, with the Moderator and Clerk. On finance, A. J. Holcombe, E. G. Cook, C. Deavours, Brother Cook, agent. On examination, A. McCain, and J. Byers.

8. Appointed a special committee, on the request from the Tuscaloosa Association, and the query from Cahawba church, consisting of J. Byers, A. McCain, A. J. Holcombe, O. Franklin, and E. Wood.

9. Appointed the following brethren, a committee on the state of Religion, viz: H. Cox, H. H. Rockett, A. J. Holcombe, and E. King.

10. Nominated the following brethren to attend sister associations, with whom we correspond: To the Coosa River, J. Byers, H. Cox, H. H. Rockett, the latter to write: To the Union, Brethren McMath, H. H. Rockett, Brother Wood to write the letter; To the Cahawba, Brethren Wood, Peterson, King, Brother King to write the letter; To

St. Clair, on Friday before the 4th Sabbath in August next. The third to be held at Mud Creek, Friday before the 1st Sabbath in July next.

22. Next session of this body to be held with the Hebron Church Jefferson co., Saturday before the 2nd Lords-day in September 1840.

23. Appointed Brother HOLCOMBE to preach the next *Introductory* Sermon, Brother ROCKETT his alternate; Brother BYERS to preach the *Missionary* Sermon, Brother Cox, his alternate.

24. *Resolved*, That the clerk of this Association, procure a book in which he shall record the Constitution, Rules of Decorum, Abstract of Principles, Statistical matter, and all resolutions, which have been adopted for the government of the Canaan Association; and that the book shall be brought to each association, for the use of the same. Adjourned till to-morrow morning.

TUESDAY MORNING 9 O'CLOCK.

25. Met this morning pursuant to adjournment; and after religious exercises, proceeded to call the names of delegates.

26. Took up the subject of reconsidering the act of yesterday, contained in the 17th article, and after mature deliberation, adopted the following preamble and resolutions:

Whereas, We consider it of high importance to preserve a union among the churches of this body, thereupon,

Resolved, That the act of this Association, appointing a committee to act in conjunction with a committee of the Tuscaloosa Association, on the case of Rupes Vally and Mt Moriah churches, be and the same is hereby repealed.

Resolved further, That in order to give general satisfaction, this association will now proceed to appoint one delegate from each church in its bounds, except Rupes Vally, to attend at said church, for the purpose of investigating the conduct of that church, and report the result of their labours to this body at its next session.

Resolved further, That the Tuscaloosa Association be requested to suspend any decision relative to a correspondence, until they hear from us again; and that they be requested to pursue a similar course with the Mt. Moriah church.

The following are the names of delegates from their respective churches: Union, Shelby, J. Butler; Shoal Creek, E. King; Bethel, Shelby, A. McCain; Hebron, W. White; Mt. Zion, J. Woodall; Ruhamah, J. Byers; Canaan, A. J. Holcombe; Liberty, T. F. Waldrop; Union, Jefferson, H. H. Rockett; Bethel, St. Clair, H. Cox; Cahawba, C. Deavours; Elyton, J. Massey; Rock-Creek, B. Gilbert; Mud-Creek, O. Franklin.

27. Appointed Brother Deavours Treasurer of this Association.

28, Appointed the following Brethren distributing agents, Brother McCain for the first district, Brother Thomason for the second, and Brother Rockett for the third.

29. Called for corresponding letters, several were read and approved.

MINUTES

OF THE

EIGHTH ANNUAL SESSION

OF THE

CANAAN ASSOCIATION

OF UNITED BAPTISTS;

HELD AT

BUCKSVILLE, TUSCALOOSA COUNTY, ALA.

Commencing on Saturday, the 11th September, 1841.

MINUTES.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1841.

1. The Introductory Sermon was preached by elder J. Byers, on the subject of Practical Piety.

2. The Delegates assembled in the house, and Letters from the Churches were read.

3. Elected elder H. Cox, Moderator, A. J. Holcombe, Recording, and E. King, Corresponding Secretary.

4. Read Constitution, Abstract of Faith, and Rules of Decorum.

5. Invited visiting Ministers of our order to take seats in the Association.

6. Received elder William Hood as corresponding messenger from Tuscaloosa Association, with their Minutes, and elder T. P. Holcombe from Mulberry, bearing a letter.

7. Appointed brethren Byers, King, and R. Wood, with the Moderator and Secretary, a committee on Arrangement of Business. On Finance—King, Timmons, and Chenault. On Documents—E. B. Rockett and E. Wood. On state of Religion—Byers, Holcombe, and Hagood.

8. Appointed brethren King and Byers a committee, to prepare and report an article to the Association on the death of our late brother, elder Hosea Holcombe, who died on the 31st July last.

9. Appointed as Corresponding Messengers—to the Coosa River Association, brethren A. McDonald, H. Cox, and H. B. Moore—brother King to write. To Union—brethren Lee and A. J. Waldrop—brother Holcombe to write. To Mulberry—brethren R. Wood and King—brother Wood to write. To Tuscaloosa—brethren Byers, Cox, and Waldrop—brother Byers to write.

10. Discontinued correspondence with Cahawba Association.

11. It being made known to the Association that the Rupe's Valley Church was desirous to have a discourse delivered during this meeting on the death of their lamented pastor, elder H. Holcombe, and

that elder W. H. Holcombe was expected to attend for the purpose; but as he had not arrived, it was agreed, on motion by elder R. Wood, that elder J. Byers be appointed to deliver a discourse on that subject, to-morrow, after dinner, provided the former should not arrive in time.

12. Brother Tate being appointed last fall, to preach the Missionary sermon to-morrow, the Association made choice, by ballot, of brethren Carson and Hood to occupy the stand, in addition to the above named two.

13. Adjourned to meet at half past 8 o'clock, A. M. on Monday.

14. The exercises of the Sabbath were in accordance with the arrangement. The Word preached seemed to be attended with the power of God; the congregation was large, and solemn; and many were deeply affected.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13.

15. Met pursuant to adjournment—prayer by bro. Carson. Called roll.

16. The com. on Arrangement, made report, and were discharged.

17. The com. on Documents reported nothing worthy of attention, and were discharged.

18. The Circular prepared by bro. Byers was read, received, and referred to a committee of revision, consisting of brethren King, Murphy, and Burgain, who are not required to report to the Association, but to place the Circular in the hands of the Superintendent.

19. The committee on the state of Religion presented the following Report, which was concurred in, and ordered to be spread on the Minutes.

BROTHER MODERATOR—Your committee, to whom was referred the subject of the state of Religion among the Churches, have had the same under consideration, and beg leave to Report—That so far as they have been able to ascertain from the letters sent up, and from other sources, with but little exception, a general coldness and apathy prevails throughout our bounds. The scarcity of Ministers leaves a number of our Churches measurably destitute of preaching and the ordinances of the Gospel.

We are of opinion that this destitution may be accounted for from the fact, that the Churches have not generally discharged their duty towards their Ministers, in sustaining them. God requires of his people a duty, on this subject, which cannot be neglected with impunity; and while we do neglect it, we cannot have any reasonable prospect of any thing else but destitution and barrenness of soul. The circumstances by which we are now surrounded, seem to call loudly, for a more lively diligence in the discharge of duty. Several of our ministering brethren who were among us have left us; and, indeed, we think they had but little encouragement to remain, as they were not sustained, and were reduced to the necessity of either ceasing to preach the Gospel, or turning their attention to some other calling to support themselves and families, or to remove to other places where the Churches were better prepared to appreciate their services and sustain them in their labors of love.

Your committee would, at this time, recommend the appointment of a Domestic Missionary, to labor among the destitute within our bounds,

had we, from past experience, any assurance that he would be sustained; but we have not—and therefore, we decline to recommend such appointment.

We believe another cause of the declension of Religion among us, is a neglect of social and family prayer. We believe it is the duty of all Churches, not only to keep up regular Conference Meetings, but also Prayer Meetings—notwithstanding they may have no Minister to go before them. We further believe, that it is the duty of every head of a family to pray regularly in his family, and impart religious instruction to them.

We hope these suggestions will be considered as emanating from a true spirit of brotherly love, as we feel nothing else on this occasion.

20. The following resolutions were offered by elder R. Wood, and unanimously adopted;

Resolved, That this Association appoint a committee of five, to prepare a petition, and present it to our Legislature at its next session, praying for the enactment of such law as they, in their wisdom, may consider proper for the suppression of the retail of intoxicating liquors.

Resolved, That the committee be authorised to prepare the petition after the adjournment; and in the name of this Association, R. Wood, A. J. Holcombe, E. King, E. B. Rockett, and A. J. Waldrop, were appointed on said committee.

Resolved further, That this Association request all those Associations with which we correspond, to adopt the same measure; and that these Resolutions be inserted in our Corresponding Letters.

21. The committee appointed, on Saturday, to prepare an article on the death of elder H. Holcombe, presented the following:

Whereas, in the dispensation of Divine Providence, we have been deprived, by death, of our much esteemed brother, and able and successful minister of the Gospel, the Rev. Hosea Holcombe—therefore,

Resolved, That the deep interest he always manifested for the good of Zion, and the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom, entitles him to the highest regard of every member of the Christian Church; and that we truly sympathize with the relatives and friends in their bereavement; and that we feel sensible of the irreparable loss which this Association has sustained in his death.

22. Reports from the District Meetings were received. The next meeting for the First District, is to be held at Hebron, Jefferson county, on Friday before the second Sabbath in August, 1842. For the Second District, at Ruhama, Jefferson county, on Friday before the third Sabbath in July, 1842; and for the Third District, at Liberty, Jefferson county, on Friday before the second Sabbath in July, 1842.

23. Appointed elder H. Cox to preach the Introductory Sermon at the next meeting of this Association, and elder A. Lea his alternate.—Elder J. Byers to preach the Missionary Sermon, and elder R. Wood his alternate.

24. Appointed brethren R. Wood, A. J. Holcombe, E. King, J. Byers, and J. Timmons, as delegates to the Baptist State Convention.

25. Appointed A. J. Holcombe to write a Circular for next year, and choose his subject. Also appointed E. King, Treasurer.

26. The Corresponding Letters were read and approved.

27. The Associational Record not having been completed by bro.

Rockett, who has removed from our bounds, bro. King was appointed to make it out, and present the book at the next meeting.

28. The committee on Finance made their Report, which was approved, and the committee discharged.

29. Appropriated thirty dollars for printing Minutes, and fifteen dollars for use of the Superintendent, who is to have 400 copies printed.

30. Ordered, that the collection taken on yesterday, ($28) together with $1 75 sent up by Elyton Church, be put into the hands of the delegates to the Convention.

31. Resolved, That notwithstanding this Association has declined the appointment of a Domestic Missionary at this time; yet so soon as the churches shall authorise the measure by the necessary contributions, we will employ one, provided a suitable minister can be obtained.

32. Resolved, That brethren D. Burgain, M. Moses, R. Murphy, O. Franklin, sen. T. Burchfield, O. Franklin, jr. A. J. Holcombe, J. Peterson, T. Miles, E. B. Rockett, F. Y. Rockett, Z. Ware, J. Orr, L. M. Wood, and J. Wilder, be appointed to act as the Executive Board of this Association. The Board appointed to meet at Canaan, on Saturday before the 5th Sunday in October next.

33. On motion of bro. King, it was unanimously agreed, that the rule requiring this body to continue in session until Tuesday, be, and the same is hereby, repealed.

34. Ordered, That the balance in the Treasury be appropriated to the use of our ministering brethren who have attended this meeting.

35. Adjourned, to meet again at Cahawba Church, Jefferson County, on Saturday before the second Sabbath in September, 1842.

Prayer and benediction by elder J. Byers.

H. COX, Moderator.

A. J. Holcombe, Rec. Sec'y.

☞ Note.—The meeting continued until Wednesday evening, during which many souls were made to rejoice in the pardoning love of the Savior, and eighteen or twenty were added to the Church.

FUNDS RECEIVED.		APPROPRIATED.	
Balance in Treasury last year,	$6 68	For printing Minutes,	$30 00
Balance in hands of Superintendent,	3 00	To Superintendent,	15 00
From the Churches for Ass. purposes,	42 25	To attending Ministers,	6 68
From Elyton Church for Convention,	1 75	To Convention,	1 75
		Balance in Treasury,	25
	$53 68		$53 68

STATE OF THE CHURCHES.

Churches.	Delegates.	Baptised.....	Received by Letter.....	Dismissed by Letter.....	Excluded.....	Restored.....	Dead.....	Total.....	Sabbath of meeting.....
Union,	H. Hill,* J. Butler, W. Wyatt,	2	4	4				20	4
Shoal Creek,	R. Wood, E. King, L. Taylor,	1	3	7		1		42	3
Bethel,	L. M. Wood, J. Orr, T. Bragg.*	15	1		1		1	46	3
Hebron,	*A. McDonald*, M. Pool, H. B. Moor,	2	2		2			58	2
Bethel,	H. Cox, L. Hill,* J. Chenault,		2	2			1	28	3
Mt. Zion,	A Scroggins W S Tanner, R Blythe, J Blythe	5	2	10	3	1	2	121	4
Cahawba,	Z. Hagood, J. Reavis, E. Truss,		2	7			1	87	1
Ruhama,	J. Byers, E. Wood, O. W. Wood,	1	1	3				55	3
Elyton,	J. Massey, sr. J. Timmons, J. Massey, jr.		1		1			26	2
Canaan,	J. Peterson, A. J. Holcombe, T. Miles,		2	19	1	1	1	56	4
Rock Creek,	Z. Waldrop, W. G. Farbus, J. H. Waldrop,		3	1	2	1	1	54	3
Union,	E. B. Rockett, J. McDaniel, F. Y. Rockett,			8	1			29	2
Liberty,	A. Lee, *A. J. Waldrop, N. Skelton*,	2	1	13	7	2	1	51	2
Rupe's Valley,	M. Moses, R. Murphy, L. Hays, D. Burgain,			4	2			96	1
Mud Creek,	*O Franklin, sen.* T Burchfield, *O Franklin jr.*		1	2	1			29	1
		27	25	80	21	6	8	798	

NOTE—Names of ordained ministers in small capitals—Licentiates in italics—Absentees.*

Churches	Counties	Pastors.	Deacons.	Clerks.	Post-Office.	§
Union,	Shelby,	R Wood,	W. Wyatt,	D. Meredith	Flora,	$1 50
Shoal Creek	do	J. Lansing	E. King, J. Lawley,	E. King,	Montevallo,	5 00
Bethel,	do		J. Gilbert, J. Wilder,	T. Bragg,	Shelbyville,	2 00
Hebron,	Jefferson,	H. Cox,	H. B. Moor, J. McLaughlin,	H. B. Moor,	Cedar grove	3 00
Bethel,	St. Clair,	H, Cox,	J. Chenault.	J. Chenault,	Branchville	2 88
Mt. Zion,	do	J. Byers,	E. Woodell, R. Blythe.	R. Blythe,	Springville,	4 00
Cahawba,	Jefferson	J. Byers,	T. Franklin, E. G. Cook,	J. Truss,	Trussville,	5 00
Ruhama,	do	J. Byers,	T. McAdams, O. W. Wood,	E. Wood,	Elyton,	4 25
Elyton,	do	J. Byers,	J. Timmons, W. Pullen, sen.	J. Timmons	do	2 00
Canaan,	do		J. Peterson, A. J. Holcombe,	A J Holcombe	Jonesboro',	2 12
Rock Creek,	do	A. Lee,	A. G. Waldrop, B. Gilbert,	A G Waldrop	do	1 50
Union,	do		R. Rockett, sen.	R Rockett jr	do	1 00
Liberty,	do	A. Lee,	J. Carrington, L. Cole,	A J Waldrop	do	2 00
Rupe's Val.	Tusk'a		M Moses, J Calfee, McMath	T A Burgain	McMath's,	5 00
Mud Cr.	Jefferson		R. Johnson, O. Franklin, sr.	R. Johnson,	Jonesboro',	1 00
						42 25

§ This column contains Contributions for Association.

☞ Elyton Church contributed $1 75 for the Convention—Collection on Sabbath, $28—making $29 75.

☞ DISTRIBUTING AGENTS—E. King, E. Wood, A. J. Holcombe.

CIRCULAR.

TO THE CHURCHES.

Beloved Brethren:—According to the appointment of last year, we address you on the duty of Church Members. A subject so copious in its nature, and so interesting in its circumstances, far exceeds the limits of a Circular Letter. A few brief remarks must suffice.

The Gospel Church is described by the Apostle Peter as built up of lively stones, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, holy and acceptable before God. True believers then, are the only constituent members of the Church of Christ; and if others are attached to it professedly, the Apostle John says of such, they went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they no doubt would have remained with us. But, as we cannot search the heart, members are scripturally received on a profession of their faith, and regularly baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity: hence, Paul to the Church at Rome—as many as have been baptized into Jesus Christ, have put on Christ; therefore, we are buried with him, by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. We cannot see how any person can make an application of this text to any other than a believer baptized by immersion. The Church of Christ, properly organized, so as to attend to every duty, must be supplied with proper Church officers. Bishop, elder, or pastor, which is readily understood, in Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus, to mean the same office, and deacons are the only Church officers described in the New Testament. The clerical order of those who have several grades, possessed of greater and less degrees of Church power, has no authority in the word of God. The duty of the bishop or pastor is a very important one: an Apostle is heard to exclaim, who is sufficient for these things! He is to preach the Word, to study to shew himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth, and to administer the Ordinances of the Gospel. Paul exhorts Timothy to give himself wholly to these things—to give attention to reading and meditation. Two other important things are recommended by Paul to Timothy—to take heed to himself and to his doctrine; and that he ought also to be exemplary in providing things honest in the sight of all men. Paul labored with his hands when not immediately engaged in preaching the Gospel, but he instructed Timothy not to entangle himself with the affairs of this world.

The Minister of the Gospel ought not to engage in those employments which are of a perplexing and embarrassing nature; but should have his family engaged in some line of industry to make a support, avoiding all unnecessary superfluities. The office of a Deacon is to attend to the temporalities of the Church, and serve tables; and although first appointed to serve the widow's tables, yet we think as a matter of expediency, there is a propriety in their attending the Lord's table, and seeing that the needs of the preachers be supplied. Much has been said on this subject of late. Ministers of the Gospel have, in

many instances, been much neglected; and when they claim a support, as a matter of justice, they are frequently exclaimed against, as though they were greedy dogs, that could never have enough. But the Apostle is very explicit on this point. Let him that is taught in the Word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things. Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges; even so hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel: not to make a gain of the Gospel, or make fortunes by preaching, but only to live. The reasonableness of this support must appear to all persons of consideration, from the injunctions delivered to Ministers to devote themselves exclusively to the duties of their office.

Further, there are a number of special duties enjoined on all Christians—reading the Scriptures, having the Word preached, praying with all prayer, and supplication in the spirit, for all saints, not only in worshiping assemblies, but in families, and in secret. God's elect are spoken of in the parable of the unjust Judge, as crying day and night unto him.

It is also the duty of all Church members, unless providentially hindered, to be punctual in attending Church meetings, to set in order the things that are wanting; to fill their seats at the communion table, to commemorate the death and sufferings of our Lord and Savior, and to shew forth his death till he come. There are also special duties enjoined on all Church members toward each other; the first, and that which seems to include all others, is love. The Savior said to his disciples, John 15, 12—This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you. Love to God and love to man constitute the very essence of religion. Paul says, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. This divine principle, ought to be the main-spring of action in all Christian duty. Putting on charity, which is the bond of perfectness—Christians should feel a deep interest in each other's well-doing, watching over each other for good, and not for evil.

If any of you be overtaken in a fault, says the Apostle, ye who are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness. If the Discipline of the Church was always exercised in the spirit of meekness and love, it no doubt would have the most salutary effect, and prevent those shameful janglings which so frequently open the mouths of the gainsayers; and the Church would appear as a city set on a hill, and her light would shine. It is all-important that Church members, in every circle in which they move, should carry a savour of religion; that whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, ye may do all to the glory of God.

Church members should walk with wisdom towards those who are without; in their dealings and transactions with the world, they ought to be punctual and just; and it is the duty of all professors of religion to be industrious in some lawful calling, to make an honest support in the sight of all men. And we decide against those schemes of speculation and debt, without any prospect of paying, which have involved so much insolvency, and left just creditors to complain; and if

Christians are so unfortunate as to fail, notwithstanding their honest intentions, the injunction of our Savior is, if any man sue thee and take away thy coat, forbid not to take thy cloak also. They should not hide their property from their just creditors, with a view of defrauding them. We must also, with religious honesty, proclaim against the practice of making and vending distilled spirits, for common use, as an unlawful traffic. We are taught by the Apostle, not to seek exclusively our own, but another's wealth; and whatever gain the maker and vender may realize, to the consumer it tends to poverty, and the common use of it has always been the abuse of it, attended with the worst of consequences both in civil and religious society.

And further, Church members should conduct in a becoming manner towards Christians of other religious denominations; where it is otherwise, great exceptions are taken by the world, in a general point of view, against religion. We ought to avoid bigotry and prejudice as much as possible. It is hardly to be expected, in this imperfect state of things, that Christians will see alike in every respect; and when the disciples informed the Savior that they forbade one to cast out devils, because he followed not with them, He said, "forbid him not, for he that is not against us is for us, and no man can do a miracle in my name and lightly speak evil of me." We should respect their religious opinions and practices: they act conscientiously, and whatever is done according to the dictation of conscience is too sacred to be made matter of ridicule; it is to be expected that some religious controversy will take place; but it ought always to be conducted in a spirit of Christian charity and moderation.

Finally, brethren, farewell! We recommend you to the Sacred Scriptures, as the only rule of faith and practice. May the Grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, be with you all. Amen!

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